

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-31 (Canceled).

32. (New) A locking clip for removably coupling a frame and a headgear assembly of a respiratory mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, the locking clip comprising:

a main body providing a front portion and a rear portion, the front portion adapted to be removably coupled with the frame and the rear portion adapted to be removably coupled to the headgear assembly,

the rear portion including a cross bar that forms an opening through which a strap of the headgear assembly can pass and be removably coupled with the cross bar, and the front portion including at least one resiliently flexible spring arm,

each spring arm including a first end including a locking tab at a free end thereof, a second end attached to the main body, a proximal portion extending from the second end, and a central portion extending from and angled with respect to the proximal portion,

wherein the proximal portion is spaced from the main body by a first gap and the central portion is spaced from the rear portion by a second gap, the first and second gaps forming a general L-shape.

33. (New) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the second gap extends from a lateral side of the clip.

34. (New) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the at least one resiliently flexible spring arm is flexible within the plane of the main body.

35. (New) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the locking clip includes a pair of spring arms.

36. (New) The locking clip according to claim 35, wherein the locking clip includes a central support tab positioned between the pair of spring arms, the central support tab adapted to be inserted into a slot of the frame to guide the locking clip into engagement with the frame.

37. (New) The locking clip according to claim 36, wherein the central support tab extends forward from each of the spring arms.

38. (New) The locking clip according to claim 37, wherein the central support tab includes a groove adapted to receive a protrusion provided in the slot of the frame when the locking clip and frame are removably coupled to one another.

39. (New) The locking clip according to claim 38, wherein the groove has a length that is at least half a length of the central support tab.

40. (New) The locking clip according to claim 39, wherein the front portion and the rear portion are disposed at an angle with respect to one another.

41. (New) The locking clip according to claim 40, wherein an outward surface of each spring arm includes a finger grip portion adapted to facilitate gripping by the patient in use.

42. (New) The locking clip according to claim 41, wherein the finger grip portion includes a series of protrusions.

43. (New) The locking clip according to claim 42, wherein the locking clip is configured to allow the patient to grasp the same between the thumb and forefinger of the patient.

44. (New) The locking clip according to claim 43, wherein the first and second gaps provide flexing space for each spring arm.

45. (New) The locking clip according to claim 44, wherein each spring arm has a general spring loop design.

46. (New) The locking clip according to claim 45, wherein the locking clip is made of a polyester material.

47. (New) A headgear assembly comprising:
at least one strap; and
a locking clip according to claim 32.

48. (New) A respiratory mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:

a frame having a main body and a side frame member provided on each lateral side of the main body, at least one of the side frame members including an integrally formed locking clip receiver assembly; and

at least one locking clip according to claim 32, the front portion of the at least one locking clip adapted to be removably coupled with the at least one locking clip receiver assembly of the frame.

49. (New) The respiratory mask assembly according to claim 48, wherein the mask assembly is a nasal mask.

50. (New) A locking clip for removably coupling a frame and a headgear assembly of a respiratory mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, the locking clip comprising:

a main body providing a front portion and a rear portion, the front portion adapted to be removably coupled with the frame and the rear portion adapted to be removably coupled to the headgear assembly,

the front portion including a pair of resiliently flexible spring arms and a central support tab positioned between the pair of resiliently flexible spring arms, the central support tab adapted to be inserted into a slot of the frame to guide the locking clip into engagement with the frame,

wherein the central support tab includes a groove adapted to receive a protrusion provided in the slot of the frame when the locking clip and frame are removably coupled to one another, the groove having a length that is at least half a length of the central support tab.

51. (New) The locking clip according to claim 50, wherein each resiliently flexible spring arm is flexible within the plane of the main body.

52. (New) The locking clip according to claim 50, wherein the central support tab extends forward from each of the spring arms.